

What's New

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SPARK

Did you know you can beat stress, lift your mood, fight memory loss, sharpen your intellect, and function better than ever simply by elevating your heart rate and breaking a sweat? The evidence is incontrovertible: Aerobic exercise physically remodels our brains for peak performance. Health experts have long known that exercise is good for us. But for many people, the promise of a healthier body isn't enough to get them up and keep them active. In his book "SPARK", The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and The Brain, by John J. Ratey, MD, he makes a compelling case for exercising to boost brain function and improve our mind-body connection.

The author spells out the remarkable role that aerobic exercise plays in alleviating common conditions such as depression, anxiety, ADHD, and stress. He details the stabilizing and stimulating effect of exercise on hormones and neurotransmitters that affect learning, motivation, and mood — and how exercise combats the cognitive decline that comes with aging. Throughout the book, Dr. Ratey shares case studies and explains research to help you understand why exercise is critical for short-term and long-term brain function — and how exercise can even alter brain structure, stimulating the growth of new brain cells and increasing the size of brain areas responsible for high-level thinking.

In Naperville, Illinois (outside Chicago) a PE teacher dramatically changed how and when PE is taught. The Zero Hour exercise program uses heart rate monitors and kids are told to MOVE in order get their heart rates up to 80-90 % of their aerobic rate by using a variety of options. Guess what happened? Test scores and grades skyrocketed. In fact, this school district of over 19,000 kids is now first in the WORLD for science test scores. These results seem to start with exercise. For additional information about this program go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULciZ8jSgHA>

During July of 2012, the Springville Observation and Assessment Center adopted their own Zero Hour exercise program. Springville was able to obtain heart rate monitors for the youths as they exercise daily from 6:00-7:00 A.M. They typically run in the community or participate in video workout programs such as "Insanity" or "P90-X". These activities are supervised by a PE teacher employed by the Nebo School District and facility staff.

Springville employees indicate that residents who participate in the Zero Hour program seem better able to regulate their emotions and tend to behave more positively. They demonstrate improved stress coping abilities as well. The residents are thought to be able to focus and concentrate better during school and exhibit improved scores on their academic posttests at the end of their stay.

Throughout the year, several other Division facilities have adopted the Zero Hour exercise program. These include Ogden Observation and Assessment Center, the Decker Lake Youth Center, Lightning Peak, and the Price Detention Center.

It is hoped that everyone who participates in these programs experiences a SPARK of improvement in their overall health and happiness. (For additional information check out the following web site, <http://www.sparkinglife.org/>)